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India and Ethiopia Nurture a Long Tradition of Technology Transfer

Cover photograph:

An Indian technician shows his Ethiopian counterpart how to operate a machine which dyes typewriter ribbons.

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Contributions from readers are welcome on specific cases, issues and problems in Technical Co-operation among Developing Countries (TCDC). Short letters are also invited. We reserve the right to edit submitted material.

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The TCDC emblem on our cover displays a symbolic bridge joining the countries and people of the Southern hemispheres. The centre of the emblem —where the Southern, Northern, Eastern and Western parts of the world all join— symbolizes a further and ultimate objective of TCDC: the enhancement of truly global partnership for development.

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READEX FICHE

Tanzania Hosts Africa's First TCDC Market

By I. Rajeswary

Arusha, Tanzania – Here in the shadow of Mount Meru, this quiet conference centre was the site of two firsts last December. It was the scene of the first programming exercise on Technical Co-operation among Developing Countries (TCDC) to be held in sub-Saharan Africa, and the first such meeting in which a least developed country served as host.

Despite the lure of nearby Lake Manyara and the call of the wild in Arusha National Park, delegates spent five days from 4 to 8 December, in the Arusha International Conference Centre hammering out a total of 206 TCDC exchanges. "In fact," said Ake Nerman, Senior Regional Officer of the Special Unit for TCDC of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), "it was the first exercise where the host country's needs much exceeded its capacities. As it turned out, 176 projects directly benefitted Tanzanian institutions."

G. M. R. Budotella of Tanzania's Grapes Research Centre said he was pleased that his team succeeded in reaching agreements with Egypt, Brazil, Turkey, China and India for training in agronomy, brandy-making and crop husbandry. Mrs. Apruna Humba, a Manpower Management Officer from Tanzania's Fisheries Corporation said India and Thailand had offered to train Tanzanians in fish technology, marine engineering and refrigeration, while China will share its expertise in shrimp farming. "The exchanges we have agreed to will help boost Tanzania's economy," said Mrs. Humba.

Eighteen countries—six from Africa, three from the Arab States and Europe, six from Asia and three from Latin America—sent representatives to Arusha, along with five UN agencies. France and the Soviet Union. Forty Tanzanian firms and institutions were present and most were able to conclude TCDC agreements with delegates from participating countries.

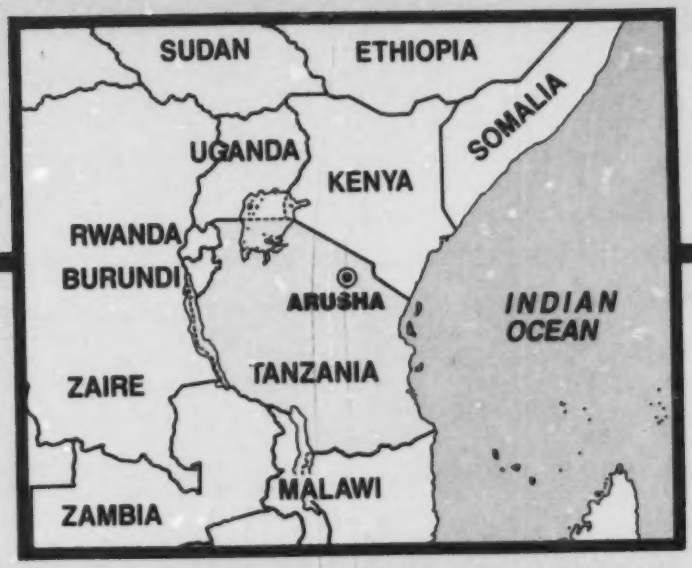
Conference was held in the shadow of Mount Meru.

The Government of Tanzania organized the programming exercise in co-operation with UNDP's Special Unit for TCDC. Financial support from the Special Unit helped pay for the services of Dr. Mokiwa Kigoda, a Senior Economist with the State Planning Commission. He prepared a list of Tanzania's capacities which included expertise such as wine-growing and animal husbandry, training and consultants as well as the country's needs, especially in the area of agricultural research. A full compendium was ready by August 1989 and it was mailed to UNDP field offices of the invited countries to be handed over to the respective governments. The Government of Tanzania then despatched small delegations to Latin America and the Caribbean, Africa, and the Far East to clarify any questions raised by governments or institutions that received the compendium. The Special Unit funded these trips. Funds were also obtained from Tanzania's Parliament to support the co-ordinating committee.

Professor Kighoma A. Malima, Vice Chairman of the State Planning Commission, who opened the meeting, said Tanzania had gained considerable experience in South-South co-operation. "Today," he said, "we have co-operation agreements with many developing countries not only in the technical and economic fields but in the socio-political area as well." Professor Malima said that prevailing economic conditions in developing countries made such co-operation an even more urgent necessity. He added: "We do expect that the deliberations of this programming

exercise will go beyond the usual declarations and identify concrete projects that could be implemented by Tanzania and the participating countries." Professor Malima is also a Member of Parliament and a Minister of State in the President's Office.

Surinder M.S. Chadha, Director of the Special Unit, commended the co-ordinating committee for its excellent organization. He said the Special Unit's role was "to help sovereign nations forge technical co-operation." In the last three years, he said, the Special Unit has assisted 90 countries in generating 2,000 TCDC projects. Mr. Chadha said the programming exercise was significant for Africa as a



Mrs. Apruna Humba from Tanzania's Fisheries Corporation.

Mrs. Liang Dan, China's team leader.

Delegates discussing TCDC exchanges.

Highlights of South-South Exchanges:

Tanzania will benefit from the following countries:

Brazil to provide training in pasture research and animal breeding, design and manufacture of agricultural implements, short-term consultancy in veterinary science, and consolidation of air transport systems.

China to share expertise in acupuncture, ceramic technology, biogas and small hydro projects. Both countries agreed to co-operate in a feasibility study for the design and manufacture of rice transplanting and cotton harvesting machines.

Egypt to train Tanzanians in information technology and computer science, and share its expertise in leather goods.

Ghana to provide consultancies and training in social statistics and airport management.

India to help in drought and salinity research, pesticides formulation and analysis, and horticulture research and training.

Indonesia to provide training in animal and poultry disease control.

Kenya to help with tea blending and packaging.

Nigeria to supply pharmacists and university teachers.

Thailand to train 15 Tanzanian textile industry technicians for three months.

Turkey to undertake a study of the metal engineering industry with a view to identifying suitable products and manufacturers.

Yugoslavia to provide research and teaching staff to the Sokoine University of Agriculture, and also assist in preparing a plan to manage the water resources of Tanzania's river basins.

Zambia to despatch experts in pharmaceuticals packaging.

Tanzania will help the following countries:

Brazil to get help in beefcattle development.

China to learn how to cultivate mangoes, bananas and sisal.

Ghanaians to be trained in rural co-operatives.

Kenya will be introduced to wine-making. Consultants will also help strengthen its coffee and maize research.

Lesotho to get assistance in the development of farm implements.

Zambians will be instructed on farm management and animal health.

whole because of Tanzania's initiative in bringing together so many countries to promote collective self-reliance.

Most of the projects agreed to in Arusha were modest in size, to be carried out by short and medium-term consultants or through training arrangements. Over half the agreements involved industry and agriculture, including livestock and fisheries. Other projects involved sharing expertise in management training, banking, computer sciences,energy and water, airports and air transport, health research and university training. The largest number of projects agreed to by Tanzania were with Brazil, Egypt, Thailand, Turkey and Yugoslavia.

Observed China's team leader, Mrs. Liang Dan: "It was a good meeting. But the follow-up action is most important. When we return home, we will start working on the project agreements that we drew up at this meeting. We hope the Tanzanians do likewise." Follow-up action includes choosing the experts, ensuring that they are accepted by the recipient country and making arrangements for their replacement while they are away from their jobs. The salaries of these experts will continue to be paid by their respective governments while the recipient country will attend to their needs during their stay in the country.

Tanzanians are already taking follow-up measures of their own. Arthur G. K. Mwakapugi, head of International Economic Co-operation in the President's Office, said the co-ordinating committee set up to organize the exercise would not be disbanded. "We have drawn up a list of projects that were agreed to, many of which will benefit Tanzania," he said. "So we will push for these projects to get started." ■

How Tanzania's Programming Exercise Got Off the Ground

Midway through the Arusha meeting, as he paused in his work for a brief interview, Arthur G.K. Mwakapugi was visibly fatigued, and with good reason. As head of International Economic Co-operation of the State Planning Commission in Dar-es-Salaam, Mr. Mwakapugi, 39, was the key figure in getting Tanzania's programming exercise together. For days prior to the meeting, he had been shunting between the conference centre in Arusha and Dar-es-Salaam, attending to last minute details, catching only a few hours sleep on the couch in his office.

A Tanzanian group approached the Special Unit for Technical Co-operation among Developing Countries during Pakistan's highly successful programming exercise in 1988 and indicated that Tanzania would like to host such an exercise. Planning for the Arusha meeting began with the selection of Dr. Mokiwa Kigoda, a Senior Economist with the State Planning Commission, as the consultant to prepare a compendium of Tanzania's needs and capacities. Mr. Mwakapugi met Dr. Kigoda when they were in national service and he knew that Dr. Kigoda was the man for the job. "He knows Tanzania's economic climate and I thought it would be easy for us to communicate with him."

Having never attended a programming exercise, Mr. Mwakapugi, who majored in Economics at Makerere University in Uganda, put his training and planning experience to good use. He also could count on advice from the Special Unit for TCDC in New York. A co-ordinating committee of representatives of interested ministries was set up. With Mr. Mwakapugi at the helm, the group and Dr. Kigoda pinpointed institutions and organizations in the public and private sectors to be included in the exercise. In doing so, they had to consider the expertise, consultancies, training capacities and joint venture possibilities that could be offered to other developing countries on a TCDC basis.

Top: **Dr. Mokiwa Kigoda prepared Tanzania's directory of capacities and needs.**

Arthur Mwakapugi, the chief organizer of Tanzania's TCDC market.

Those chosen received questionnaires for use in drawing up the compendium of the country's needs and capacities. Dr. Kigoda, who travelled the length and

breadth of Tanzania answering questions about the exercise, discovered that many institutions did not understand the TCDC concept. "I had to go all over the country explaining TCDC and to make sure that everyone responded to the questionnaires," he said.

As the completed questionnaires started flowing back to the committee's headquarters in Dar-es-Salaam, Dr. Kigoda listed them under such sectors as agriculture, industry, transport and communication, natural resources, water, minerals and energy, health, education and management. One section, which described what Tanzania had to offer, included background on each institution, the nature of its work and details of the services it offered. Another section cited the areas in which institutions required help and offered a brief description of their needs.

By August the compendium was ready. The Special Unit in New York started mailing them to field offices of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). The field offices passed them to the national co-ordinating authorities in each country, which in turn distributed them to institutions which had indicated an interest in joining the exercise. To answer questions and identify as many areas of co-operation as possible, the committee organized "programming missions" to countries which requested them. Dr. Kigoda led a delegation to India, Thailand and Indonesia in November. "Time was not on our side," he recalls. "We could not go to as many countries as we wanted."

By October 1989, everything began to fall into place. With the help of Soren Tejno, UNDP's Assistant Resident Representative in Dar-es-Salaam, Mr. Mwakapugi monitored the response to the invitations. "I would telephone Mr. Tejno twice a day for updates," he said. He was also frequently flying to and from Arusha, checking to ensure that the facilities at the International Conference Centre were in good working order.

On 3 December — a day before the Arusha meeting — Mr. Mwakapugi held a briefing for all Tanzanian participants to go over with them again what the programming exercise expected to accomplish and to answer any last minute questions.

A room at Mount Meru Hotel was converted into a computer centre. During the meeting, as project proposals were agreed to between participating countries, they were fed into the computer. The final list of 206 proposals would be made available to delegates at the close of the meeting.

But with two days still to go, Mr. Mwakapugi's work was far from over. He glanced at his watch. It was time to return to the negotiations in Mbayuwayu Hall. He remarked that he was looking forward to a long sleep — on his bed instead of the couch in his office — and at a decent hour. —**I.R.** ■

Ethiopia and India Nurture a Long Tradition of Technology Transfer

By I. Rajeswary

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia — In 1550 A.D., blacksmiths, carpenters and masons from Goa sailed to Ethiopia to help construct bridges. They also introduced lime and mortar construction to the country when building the royal palace in Gonder province, in the north-west part of the country.

Today, more than four centuries later, India is sharing with Ethiopia its experience in developing small and medium-scale industries. The exchange took place at a week-long international workshop in Addis Ababa last December.

The gathering, jointly organized by the National Small Industries Corporation (NSIC) of India and Ethiopia's Handicrafts and Small Industries Development Agency (HASIDA), was attended by representatives from 34 African countries. Their participation was financed by the Special Unit for Technical Co-operation among Developing Countries of the United Nations Development Programme.

Ethiopia's President Mengistu Haile Mariam, who visited India in 1985 and personally initiated the exchange, opened the exposition on 11 December. The pavilions were built on a six hectare site 15 minutes from downtown Addis Ababa, and will become a permanent industrial park. Participants observed the manufacture of egg trays, tooth picks, typewriter ribbons, fuel briquettes, padlocks, water heaters, erasers, stapler machines, wick stoves, umbrellas, bolts and nuts and even spectacle frames. In most instances, the production process was kept simple and often involved spring-driven presses and pedal-power rather than expensive electric generators.

Indian technicians explain the manufacture of flashlights.

After seeing the machines at work, a number of participants expressed interest in introducing similar operations in their own countries. Ake Nerman, Senior Regional Officer in the Special Unit, stressed that while the Special Unit was not a "capital assistance" organization, it was prepared to help pay airfares for those travelling to India to arrange technology transfers.

Demissachew Assefa, Head of Technology Policy and Research in Ethiopia's Ministry of Industry, said that although the small-scale industries sector was still in its infancy, the workshop could give it the boost it needed. He added that a small enterprisé unit is expected to be set up within his Ministry shortly.

Tadewos Harge-work, Ethiopia's Minster of Industry, opened the workshop, which was held in Africa Hall in the headquarters of the Economic Commission of Africa. Mr. Tadewos said the Ethiopian government recently enacted legislation providing exemptions from customs duties on imported machinery and equipment so as to spur the development of small-scale enterprises. "Legislation also allows direct foreign investment in the field," he said.

J. S. Juneja, chairman of India's National Small Industries Corporation, recalled that early in his country's independence, over 80 per cent of the machines required for manufacturing were imported. "Today, our imports of capital goods for small industries have gone down to less than five per cent." India's small industries sector has grown to the point that it represents 50 per cent of the nation's industrial production, 30 per cent of its exports, and generates over 75 per cent of total employment in manufacturing.

Shoes manufactured by Ethiopian craftsmen on display at the exposition.

Papers presented at the workshop ranged from policy and institutional support for small-scale industries to technology transfer among developing countries. Discussions were held after each paper and participants were candid about the sometimes difficult conditions for doing business in their respective countries.

Rajcoomar Sungkur of the Small Industries Development Organization in Mauritius said there was a lot to learn from India. He recalled that when the Indian government stopped the import of British razor blades, Indian citizens were forced to use local ones. Initially, they cut themselves while shaving because of the poor quality of the Indian products. But as the quality improved, Indian blades were much sought after. "The Government's firm commitment saved that industry. While small is beautiful and effective, small is also fragile and needs nurturing," he said.

Salah Fessi from Tunisia's Economic Ministry said his country had an Investment Code which favoured small and medium-scale entrepreneurs and this helped boost the industry. Some participants reported that the absence of a strong research and development base in many African countries impeded small industry growth. Many felt that it was time that African nations started relying on themselves instead of countries of the North. "If we do not adopt development policies that suit us, we can never progress," said a participant from Gabon, as colleagues nodded in agreement.

At the end of the week, partici-

pants adopted 34 recommendations which they took home with them to encourage their policy-makers into giving more support to small and medium-scale enterprises. Ethiopia has already taken the first step: the machines it bought from India, and which the participants saw at the exposition, are now being used to produce consumer goods locally.

Among the recommendations was a call for African governments to set up a network of support institutions for the rapid and balanced growth of small-scale industries. Financial institutions and banks were urged to re-orient their activities to enable small-scale industries to obtain loans more easily. And African countries were called upon to set up a system for the further exchange of expertise, information, joint development and financing of research. ■

Right: **Rajcoomar Sungkur of Mauritius.**

Bottom left: **J. S. Juneja, chairman of India's National Small Industries Corporation.**

Bottom right: **Demissachew Assefa of Ethiopia's Ministry of Industry.**

Delegates discussed with UNDP's Ake Nerman possible assistance from the organization.

Blueprint for a Trade Information Network

Harare, Zimbabwe — Members of the Chambers of Commerce and Industry (CCI) of the Group of 77 (G-77) called for regional meetings of experts in Asia, Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean to draw up three blueprints for commercial information networks for each region. They chose the International Trade Centre (ITC) as adviser to the experts. Participants also requested that ITC's feasibility study for an interregional trade data network be completed by June 1990. The three regional meetings will be followed by a global meeting of experts in Karachi to draw up recommendations to expedite the setting up of the network. The date for the Karachi meeting has yet to be decided.

Participants at the third global meeting of the Chambers of Commerce and Industry held here last November endorsed a decision to speed up the launching of the network. The CCIs, who are G-77 members, view an information network an essential tool in promoting South-South trade, transfer of technology, and new investments from non-industrial nations. At the Harare meeting, they called on CCIs to collaborate closely with their respective governments on cross-border trade matters and be included on bilateral trade and economic commissions. CCI members were given a progress report on the proposed programming exercise aimed at initiating economic and technical co-operation between interested developing countries through trade, joint-ventures, exchanges of experts and trainees. They also agreed to setting up a permanent CCI secretariat. All these matters will be considered by the CCI Steering Committee in the middle of the year, and subsequently by the fourth meeting of CCIs to be hosted by Cuba in November.

The first meeting of CCIs of developing countries was held in Rio de Janeiro in December 1987 to exchange ideas on furthering South-South co-operation. At a follow-up meeting in New Delhi in 1988, participants came up with the idea of establishing a commercial information network. Syed Shahid Husain, Deputy Director of the Special Unit for Technical Co-operation among Developing Countries of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) said that at each of these meetings, organizers and participants made "painstaking efforts in identifying common problems and priority action plans and future goals." Mr. Husain, who attended the meeting, added: "The Special Unit assisted the G-77 countries in organizing these meetings and in producing some realistic and viable recommendations for the much-needed trade information networks in the region."

Those attending the Harare meeting included more than 200 delegates from 50 countries — 25 from Africa, 20 from Asia and five from Latin America and the Caribbean. Another 10 countries were represented by their respective High Commissions, embassies or trade associations based in Harare. International organizations, and the African regional Preferential Trade Agreement organization, were also present.

The conference was co-sponsored by the Confederation of Zimbabwe Industries and the Zimbabwe National Chambers of Commerce in association with the Office of the G-77 chairman. Zimbabwe's private sector financed the organizational costs. The local business community was also well represented. During the meeting, delegates were given copies of a compendium of goods and services available in Zimbabwe to enable them to explore prospects for technical or commercial co-operation. Mr. Husain told participants that the Special Unit would consider supporting any specific proposals that might promote economic and technical co-operation in the business community of developing countries.

The Harare gathering stressed that the future CCI data bank should include profiles of importers, exporters and manufacturers, import-export regulations, trade statistics, tariffs and non-tariff barriers, country profiles, and information on each country's research and development facilities. They also endorsed the need for standardizing the formats of information collection. Existing telecommunication facilities were reviewed and it was suggested that the exchange of information should be by computer, magnetic tapes and floppy diskettes.

Opening the conference, Dr. Oliver Munyaradzi, Zimbabwe's Minister of Trade and Commerce, said there was an urgency for developing countries to co-operate with each other in the exchange of trade and technology. "There is an

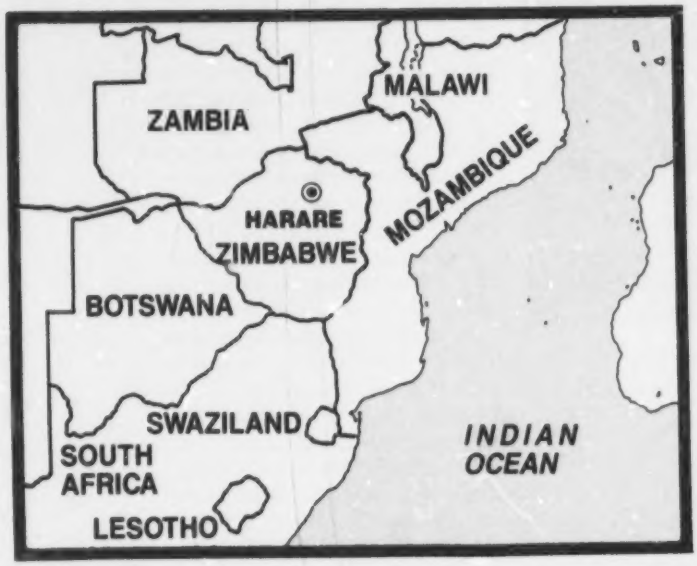
increasing need for South-South co-operation and for greater economic unity among developing countries to limit their vulnerability in the face of new agreements between developed nations," he said.

Datuk Musa Hitam, Special Envoy of the Government of Malaysia, commended member nations for their commitment to expedite the setting up of the information network within a short span of two years. "It is this kind of spirit and energetic drive that we developing countries should inherit and nurture to achieve our goals for meaningful co-operation," he said. Datuk Musa was representing the chairman of the Group of 77 at the meeting.

Datuk Musa said that despite the improving international economy, the majority of developing countries "are still in the devilish grip of excessive debt overhang." In addition, he said, exports from developing countries continue to be frustrated by protectionist policies. The Malaysian envoy said efforts to redress the global economic imbalance through a North-South dialogue was less than satisfactory.

"Therefore, the destiny of our economic well-being lies with the strength of our determination to utilize the existing complementarities and resources available among us," he said.

Seventeen major Zimbabwean manufacturers and exporting companies set up booths at the conference centre to display their products and promote economic co-operation among developing countries, especially in trade. ■



The CCI conference was held in Harare.

Bridging Diversity

By Ramadhar

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN (FAO) has played a pioneering role in the promotion of TCDC in agriculture, forestry and fisheries. The organization is helping the developing countries to forge links of mutual collaboration through inter-country consultations, workshops, seminars, and study tours, the expansion of information systems that disseminate data relevant to South-South co-operation and support to regional and sub-regional organizations and networks. Particular emphasis is given to the use of institutions in the developing world for inter-country training.

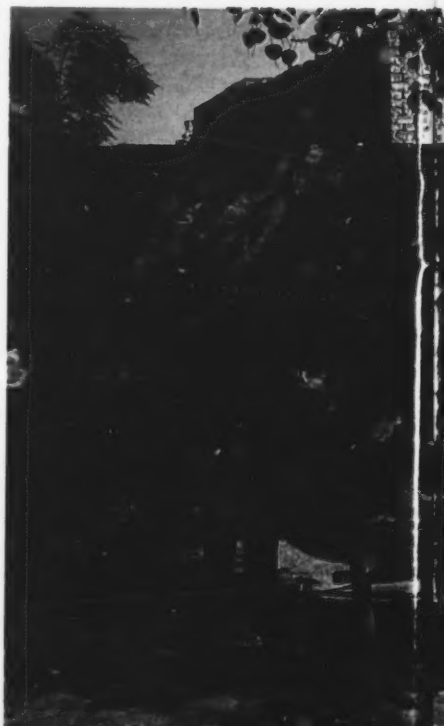
A TCDC project in Turkey illustrates the growing commitment of the developing countries to inter-country co-operation, and FAO's catalytic role in stimulating that co-operation. Forty-one participants from sixteen countries — Algeria, Bangladesh, Democratic Yemen, Egypt, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Oman, Pakistan, Senegal, Somalia, the Sudan, the Syrian Arab Republic, Tunisia and Yemen — have attended Turkish institutions to take part in courses in watershed management, forest nursery management, afforestation, the production of veterinary vaccines and apiculture.

The project also typifies the cost-sharing concept of TCDC. The Turkish Government contributed about US$49,000 to cover all local costs of the courses — including board, lodging and internal transport. FAO assisted with technical advice and covered international travel and essential equipment through a contribution of $227,000.

The second phase of this cost-sharing project, being implemented this year, will concentrate on new areas of training such as sheep and wool production, agriculture mechanization, leather technology, artificial insemination and the breeding of dairy cattle. The courses in the production of veterinary vaccines and forest nursery and afforestation techniques will be repeated. More than half the projects relate to agriculture, livestock, fisheries and forestry. With the help of UNDP's Special Unit for TCDC, Turkey held a programming exercise in 1987, attended by 21 countries, which resulted in the signing of 247 agreements in many sectors, including agriculture.

An ever-increasing number of research, extension and training institutions in developing countries enjoy a status comparable to first-rate institutions in the North. Many of these institutions have opened up their facilities to trainees of other countries. Through networking and "twinning" arrangements, these institutions spark and sustain a process of long-term collaboration.

In the Latin America and Caribbean Region alone, about 20 technical co-operation networks are supported by FAO. Institutions involved in TCDC exchanges make use of the region's technical, human and financial resources in order to increase the food security and raise the living standards of



Top: **Developing countries can learn about beekeeping from Tunisia.**

Bottom: **In India, young farmers are trained in artificial insemination.**

their populations.

TCDC networks not only facilitate contacts among scientists and technicians, but also tackle development problems through joint action programmes. Twinning is a professional relationship that pairs two similar organizations, one a comparatively mature entity with solid professional competence and operational experience, the other relatively less experienced and seeking to improve its capabilities.

The major advantage of twinning is that an institution actively and successfully engaged in the same field stands behind the technical assistance being offered to its experienced "twin." These special TCDC relationships also permit the staff of an institution to turn to the staff of their twin institution for information and advice many years after the formal contract has expired.

TCDC is one of the main components of the UN's "new dimensions" concept which seeks to generate a closer association between local capacities and the delivery of technical assistance from outside. The UNDP Governing Council expressly allows up to 10 per cent of a country's Indicative Planning Figure (IPF) or US$7 5 million —whichever is less for the financing of TCDC projects for the benefit of another country. There is no limit to the use of IPF funds for TCDC projects within the country itself.

Regional and inter-regional TCDC projects promote activities that are of interest to several countries. By optimizing the use of locally-available resources, the TCDC approach in these projects is very cost effective. Example: in the past, despite the buffalo's significant contribution to Asian agriculture, very little scientific attention was given to increasing its milk and meat production or to improving its power as a draught animal. Today, an FAO and UNDP regional project has been set up to strengthen the Regional Network of Buffalo Development Centres in Asia.

Of the 13 countries in the Network, India, Pakistan, the Philippines, Sri Lanka and Thailand are taking part in Phase II of the project. It serves to strengthen the research capabilities of five national institutions and train junior scientists to carry out studies in buffalo production by smallholders, to conduct on-farm research and to disseminate information.

In Eastern and Southern Africa, the Government of Japan is making an important contribution to TCDC by supporting a five-year project to set up a network and a centre for training in agricultural marketing, thus exemplifying the complementarity between North-South and South-South co-operation.

We have seen an exchange of new technologies take place across the South. Many institutions have become the nucleus of collaboration between countries that reinforces their individual and collective self-reliance. The emblem of the Buenos Aires Conference was a symbolic bridge joining the countries and peoples of the Southern hemisphere. The centre of the emblem, where North, South, East and West all join, symbolizes the ultimate objective of TCDC — the enhancement of a truly global partnership for development. Today, FAO's TCDC projects are helping to bridge the diversity of a wide variety of cultures and technologies throughout the developing world. ■

Mr. Ramadhar is the Chief of TCDC Interregional and Global Programmes and other Special Matters Unit of FAO, Rome.

INRES-South to Pursue Decentralization of Its Data Base

By Edward C. White

The Information Referral Service — INRES-South — is beginning to decentralize its data base. By decentralization, we mean making the INRES-South data base more easily available to as many locations as possible around the developing world.

At present, apart from telephone requests made by UNDP staff in New York, most inquiries come to us by regular mail. When we get these requests, we make a printout and post the results to the requesting institution within 24 hours. But international mail being notoriously slow, it often takes several weeks before the information arrives.

As a first step in overcoming these delays, INRES-South established a facility to enable users to access the data base using a modem and Carbon Copy Plus Version 5.0 software. In this way, a user in Jamaica can have instant access to our list of institutions in developing countries offering a wide range of expertise and training programmes. *Telecomputing*, as this is called, makes it possible for a user to scroll through the data for as long as he wishes.

But in developing countries, the time saved in telecomputing is often offset by the very high cost of international phone calls. Moreover, accessing the data base via modem is not always feasible as telephone lines are sometimes unclear, and a number of countries still have not adopted or legalized private use of computers for telecommunications.

Decentralizing the INRES-South data base outside TCDC headquarters in New York requires the host agency or country to acquire an appropriate computer and printer, and a staff member to learn how to conduct inquiries using the UNBIS (UN Bibliographical Information Service) thesaurus.

Users should not be put off by the mention of UNBIS, as the system requires minimal training. The equipment needed is a fast computer like the one used by INRES-South (an 80386 microprocessor operating at 20 Mhz), and a Hewlett Packard LaserJet II printer.

Initially, decentralization will focus on specialized UN agencies, and a few developing countries where the interest in TCDC activities is high. It is hoped that these agencies and countries will make TCDC a regular part of their development programmes. The parent INRES-South data base will continue to be maintained at the Special Unit for TCDC in New York.

Decentralization of INRES-South presents many opportunities, but there are difficulties, too. The most obvious is cost. There is no doubt that the equipment required is expensive.

But in time, as UNDP field offices and other organizations which house the INRES-South data base become more involved, there will be significant savings. Decentralized data entry will lead to improvements in the quality of information contained in the data base. Finally, with decentralization, users in developing countries need not rely on us to make queries because they can access it themselves. This accords well with the TCDC philosophy of collective self-reliance.

Currently, arrangements have been made to install the INRES-South system in UNDP field offices in Ghana and Haiti and in the Centre Nationale d'Information et de Documentation Economique (CNIDE) in Algeria. Actual installation has been delayed due to late delivery of the hardware by the computer supplier, but this should soon be rectified. We also hope to install the system in at least two other field offices during the year. The experience will be monitored closely, so that the lessons learned can be applied to an accelerated distribution of the data base in 1991. ■

The New Man at INRES-South

Edward C. White has returned to UNDP headquarters in New York to head the Information Referral Service, or INRES-South, of the Special Unit for TCDC. He takes over from Jan van Eyndhoven who is now with UNDP's Planning and Co-ordination Office. Mr. White's last held position was Resident Representative in Western Samoa. He will be a contributing writer on INRES-South for Co-operation South.

New York — When Edward White was posted to Iran as Deputy Director of the U.S. Peace Corps in 1967, he never thought that he would return to Iran nine years later, only to find a once beautiful country caught up in a rush of unfocused growth. "I was struck by the uneven nature of development and its ill-effects— pollution, choked traffic and ugly cities," Mr. White says, recalling his return to Iran as UNDP Deputy Resident Representative. "It had become a rat race. And it was so out of tune with traditional Persian culture which is much more relaxed, and embraces poetry and the fine arts."

After Iran, the Peace Corps sent Mr. White to Libya because of his knowledge of Arabic. "The irony of the whole thing was that I was really getting comfortable in Farsi when I had to move on," he says. He subsequently served in the Eastern Caribbean and Kenya. To this day, his Kenya tenure is close to his heart. "I think human civilization began in Kenya. When you stand on the edge of the Rift Valley and look out from the plateau where Nairobi is located, and you see the animals grazing in the distance, wild and free, you feel this is where it all began."

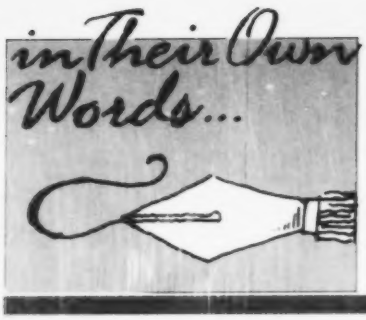
In 1972, Mr. White joined UNDP as a Liaison Officer of the United Nations Volunteer Programme in New York, staying in the job for four years. Ten years later, he returned to the UNV programme as Deputy Executive Co-ordinator, but based in Geneva. In the intervening years, he spent three years in Iran, and a tour as ResRep in Mauritania. From 1985 to 1987, he was Senior Adviser on Grassroots and NGO Development in New York.

Sometime in 1982, Mr. White says, he joined the "micro-computer revolution," eventually becoming responsible for the managerial aspects of computerizing the UNV programme.

But Mr. White is best remembered for having introduced automation to the UNDP office in Western Samoa. "It was a small office and we had to manage four countries — Samoa, Cook Islands, Niue and Tokelau. There was a lot of paperwork and we did not have a large staff," he said.

He computerized the field office accounting system and introduced electronic mail to the office. "We did not get to a paperless office but we were able to handle our work much better," he said. The office was also the first to introduce Desktop Publishing in compiling its country Development Co-operation report.

As Principal Information Services Officer for INRES-South, he intends to popularize the service and attract as many users as possible. He will continue INRES-South's efforts to decentralize the service so that more people in the field can have access to data. In time, he hopes to extend INRES-South's reach to UNDP field offices the world over. — **I.R.** ■



How a TCDC Workshop Changed My Career

By Isatou Dea Sawaneh

***IN THEIR OWN WORDS*...is an opportunity for readers to share their experience in TCDC exchange programmes. Like Mr. Yang, Mr. Huang and Mr. Luo, you can tell us why you attended the training, what it entailed and how you can apply the knowledge and experience gained in your own country.**

Readers' contributions to this page should be 600 words or less. Send to: The Editor, Co-operation South, UNDP/DC1, 19th floor, One U.N. Plaza, New York, NY 10017. Contributions for the next issue should reach us by May 31. The Editor reserves the right to edit submissions.

Tie-and-dye entrepreneur Isatou Dea Sawaneh

Banjul, Gambia — In 1982, when I was working as a nurse at the Royal Victoria Hospital in Banjul, Gambia, I used to do tie-and-dye and give them as presents to my friends. Life as a nurse was hard — long hours and low pay. I started selling some of my tie-and-dye shirts, blouses and table cloths to the Gambia Artistic Marketing Corporation, which in turn sold them to tourists.

One day in 1985, I heard about a three-month Indonesian workshop in handloom weaving, yarn dyeing and fabric analysis sponsored by UNDP. The announcement was on the Engineers Business Advisory Service which is under the Ministry of Economic Planning and Industry. Participants from developing countries were invited to learn from the Indonesians. I attended the workshop, learnt more about tie-and-dye and fabrics, and my eyes were opened to the potential of becoming a small-scale entrepreneur.

When I returned home, I continued working as a nurse. At the same time, I sought financial help from the Engineers Business Advisory Service. Late in 1986, I left nursing and set up shop making tie-and-dye products. I worked out an arrangement with the Gambia Artistic Marketing Corporation to supply my products on a regular basis to their outlets. I also started designing tie-and-dye dresses which I sold in my boutique in Banjul's crafts market.

I now have a small factory adjoining my residence in Bakau. I accept orders from different outlets. With one tailor and three workers, we cut and sew on the premises. If I cannot cope with the orders, I send them out to other tailors. I have set my eyes on the international market but that will take some time. I am not advocating that everyone should quit nursing and become craftswomen. But for me, it worked. And now I have more time for my family and two children. ■

China Learns About Industrial Standards and Quality Control

Yang Pei Sheng, of China's Ministry of Agriculture, Huang Mao Fang, of the South China Tropical Crops Products Processing Research Institute, and Luo Tie Ying, of the Farming Reclamation General Bureau of Hainan Province, took part in a study tour at the Sri Lanka Standards Institution in Colombo, Sri Lanka from September to November last year. The exchange was agreed to during China's programming exercise on Technical Co-operation Among Developing Countries in 1986. It was sponsored by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). Here, in their own words, they relate their experience.

Colombo, Sri Lanka — There were three parts to our training: a basic programme on standardization, a training course on Industrial Standardization and Quality Control for Managers, and practical training at the Rubber Testing Division of the Industrial Development Board.

Our study tour made us realize that it is very necessary for developing countries to share their valuable scientific technologies and managerial experience with each other. In this regard, a TCDC exchange is a useful tool to help countries learn from each other.

Through our training in Sri Lanka, we have learned how to formulate national standards and how to implement them. We also understand the importance of a national standards body such as the Sri Lanka Standards Institution.

Our three-month tour included practical training with the Rubber Testing Division of the Industrial Development Board (IDB), which gave us an impressive knowledge of the rubber industry in Sri Lanka. We used the Board's facilities to do some actual testing on rubber samples. At the end of the training, we prepared a report titled "Study of the Different Properties of Two Varieties of Natural Rubber." Several industrial visits as well as trips to research stations were also arranged for us.

The training enabled us to master modern theories on industrial standardization and quality control. And we were able to compare it with methods used in China. Now we can apply this advanced technology in China. ■

Adobe Adapts Slowly to Temperature Change

By Michael Woakes

Zaria, Nigeria — I would like to draw your attention to the *Miracle of Mud* by Lois Jensen in Co-operation South No. 1, 1989, who writes that "mud constructions stay cool in summer and warm in winter."

For the last 10 years, we have been living in a house constructed of mud in the traditional Hausa manner, so I speak from first-hand experience. A mud-built house stays relatively cooler during most of the hot daylight hours provided the ventilation is restricted, but after 8 p.m., the solar heat absorbed by the outside walls is radiated from the inner walls, and it is much warmer inside the house. And since ventilation is generally poor, the evening air does not quickly cool the inside of the house. The houses are therefore uncomfortable at night.

Cold weather is another problem. The temperature inside the house is very slow to respond to solar heating during the day, so it is often colder than other conventional houses.

Despite these comments, mud is a wonderful material for housing — cheap, available and beautiful. Ahmadu Bello University has several projects in hand to further promote its use. ■

Mr. Woakes teaches Geology at Ahmadu Bello University in Nigeria.

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